



THE
SCEPTRE

DECEMBER, 1933



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CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS



Is it wrong for me to envy the Cattle in the shed
Who saw the holy baby in His manger bed?
How I wish I'd been a shepherd who saw the star and came
Bringing gold and incense to the babe of Bethlehem.
Since I wasn't there to see the inimitable sight
God put in His cold blue heaven a golden star tonight
Gold hearts will be melted when its splendid light shines in
Lifting weary eyes and penetrating souls of sin.
So I lift my face to the sky, my unworthy eyes I raise
To see His white robed angels and hear their holy praise
"Glory to God in the highest, they sing over again,
Christ is born of Mary, peace on earth, good will to men"



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THE STUDENTS OF
QUEENS-CHICORA COLLEGE

CONTENTS



Editorial	Five
Silhouette, <i>by Margaret True</i>	Six
And There Were in the Same Country, <i>by Jeanette Malloy</i>	Seven
A Child's Christmas-Day Night, <i>by Margaret Trobaugh</i>	Nine
The Peddler of Dreams, <i>by Hazel Herndon</i>	Ten
Christmas Traditions of Queens-Chicora, <i>by Florence Moffitt</i>	Thirteen
Another Cup of Tea, <i>by Catherine Culp</i>	Fourteen
King Edward VII, <i>by Dean McLean</i>	Fifteen
Book Reviews	Nineteen
My Teddy Bear, <i>by Margaret Mitchell</i>	Twenty-two
A Westful World, <i>by Betty Manning</i>	Twenty-three
Who's Who Among Us	Twenty-four
Looking Over Others	Twenty-five
As They See Us	Twenty-Six

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There is that which is elemental about December trees against the sunset—strong beauty, clean truth, hope looking upward. The plainness and strength of them match the winter hearts of men—match them, and give courage to them, for the season is hard, reducing people to the fundamental; and the season is cruel, testing men harshly, and demanding bravery that may be lacking. Winter cuts away kinder natures of mankind, leaving souls stripped as the trees. But the trees point grandly upward, to where a star grows ever brighter in the sky, lifting men's hearts above a wintry struggle, reclothing the elemental in them with ethereal splendor.

That star is as the Christmas season that approaches, lighting the way of men back to Bethlehem, and to the Babe sleeping there.

The trees and the star. The stark realities of today, and the Holy Truth of all time. They are the strength and the beauty of life.

The staff of *The Sceptre* join in wishing for you a Christmas time illumined by the spirit of the Christ Child.

Christmas, 1933.

SILHOUETTE

MARGARET TRUE

S nowflakes sifting softly down on evergreens. Icy crystals clinging to trees now bare of leafy coverings. Soft particles lingering here and there, and fluttering hesitatingly about. Obscure bits of light creeping through the twilight haze. Then the darkness falling swiftly and melting houses and trees into an indistinguishable mass.

* * *

Ah, there! A brilliant point of light comes charging through the gathering gloom and spreads its brilliance upon a solemn world. The imposing waxen sentinel in a priceless holder gleams between heavy folds of richness. Bits of the luxurious interior seen vaguely through heavy plate glass. A lovely blonde thing in some wonderful filmy blue smiles enchantingly into the dark eyes which tower above her small head. A tinkling bell—and the two figures move from view.

* * *

And here a gallant bit flickers bravely, casting shadows upon the bare, but scrupulously clean space. A drooping figure works furiously, and moves shiveringly toward the meagre fire, gazing now and then wistfully upon the outside blanket of whiteness. A patter of small feet, a door thrown open, and the face is transfixed by a soft light of mingled pride and joy.

* * *

The third candle, flanked by smaller ones. Red, green, yellow—a multitudinous array of cheer. Bright faces pressed against shining panes. A stately cedar decked in silver gold, and balls of vivid color. Packages of every size, gaily wrapped, heaped high. A glowing fire, and a pervading atmosphere of happy expectancy.

* * *

Time flies on winged feet! Twelve clear peals disturb the complete solemnity of the air—and the world sleeps.

AND THERE WERE IN THE SAME COUNTRY . . .

JEANETTE MALLOY

And there were in the same country Timeon, son of John, the thief, and Rachael, servant to the daughter of the rich Ananias. Rachael of the sad and pensive eyes, Rachael of the sensitive mouth, whose beauty surpassed even her mistress, saw only the grace of Timeon, whose strong, beautiful body was the envy of all men who beheld him. And Timeon and Rachael were betrothed; and Rachael knew that Timeon's father, John, was a thief.

On the last day of December, Ananias entertained Isaac the prophet; and Rachael, the servant, heard the prophet's servant tell of the excitement in Bethlehem.

"My master gave rich gifts to the new King—myrrh and frankincense. And besides all this, there were many other fine presents also—much fine gold."

"What new King is this? Tell us, is not Herod king?"

"Nay, He is the Saviour, the King of all, the Prince of Peace, and is come to save sinners. And all who believe in Him shall live forever."

Rachael that night slipped away in the soft darkness, and made her way to the tree where Timeon awaited her. It was the tree around which the little lambs played during the day, and even yet there were pieces of wool rubbed against the bark.

"Timeon, to-night we shall go to Bethlehem to seek the new King, of whom I have heard," and Rachael drew her cloak, which the daughter of Ananias had given her, around her shoulders.

But Timeon objected, saying, "Do I not know who is king? Did not Herod put to death my kinsman, who was a thief? Has not my father told me of the cruel Herod? Come, Rachael, there is gaiety in the village below."

"But this King is come to save sinners—He is kind, and is King of all. I believe, for I heard it from one who saw."

And Timeon, to please Rachael of the sad eyes, went with her in search of the new King. And they found Him, and believed; and went in search of Timeon's father, John, that he, a thief, might believe also.

And the three brought with them such gifts as they had; and when the child touched them with His small hands, the manger was filled with a light; and John believed also, and they fell on their knees and worshipped Him.

“And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”



*“Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His wee head.”*

*“It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of all,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold.”*

*“Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heav’n’s all-gracious King!”*

*“The earth in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.”*

*“Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,
And the glory of the Lord shone round about them.”*

Luke 2.9.

A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS-DAY NIGHT

MARGARET TROBAUGH

The wind drove the snow against the frosted windows, already white and heavy with their burden. Within the room everything lent to the air of cheer and comfort. The wide stone fireplace was warmed by a huge burning log; and over the embers that had been raked to the front, popcorn was actually dancing in a wire basket. From the corner came the merry laughter of children around a lighted Christmas tree, and in every window was a miniature tree shutting out the very sight of snow and darkness. The sizzle of the pine log and the steady ticking of a tall old clock made a comfortable undertone for the conversation of the grownups who sat around the hearth enjoying a last smoke. Tales of other Christmas nights and the joys they had brought were scarcely more bright than the faces of those who talked. The flames threw a wide arc of roving light across the floor and the faces of those who watched it. The shining tree sent sparkles into every corner, and the warm glow from a lamp fell on one child curled up in a deep chair, too tired to play but much too interested to leave for bed. To her ears the buzz of the voices, the sound of the fire and the popcorn, and even the laughter of the children blended into one lulling hum; and the colors and lights of the room melted into pleasant ruddiness.



"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9.6.

THE PEDDLER OF DREAMS

HAZEL HERNDON

Introduction

Vachel Lindsay, known as the world's peddler poet, was born in Springfield, Illinois, the birthplace of Lincoln, on November 10, 1879. He made two trips through the east reciting his verses and trading his poems for bread and lodging.

Lindsay usually wrote about things that were noisy, colorful, vigorous, exciting, and animated. The musical quality of his poems was written to be sung and chanted. Some of his books of poems are: *General Booth Enters Heaven*; *The Congo*; *Going to the Stars*; and *Handy Guide for Beggars*.

He died in Springfield on December 5, 1931.

The following story is based on the leading facts of his life, interwoven with the golden threads of imagination:

On the white doorsteps of the ancestral Lindsay home, across from the Governor's mansion, sat a little dark-haired boy with great brown eyes. Resting on the floor boards by his side was a small blue bowl filled with warm water and soft lathered soap. From a spool at his lips floating upward into the clear spring sunlight sailed large, gay bubbles full of rainbows. Along the street came a laughing group of boys. They stopped and from the roadside pointed jeering fingers at the lad.

"Hi, you sissy! you couldn't play a game of ball if your life depended on it, could you?" And laughingly they hurried on to their play, mumbling among themselves what a dumb fellow that Lindsay kid was. But the Lindsay kid himself sat very still and kept on blowing rainbow bubbles into the sky.

Vachel found many little pictures in his bubbles that others were not allowed to see. In one that was large and beautiful, he saw a schoolroom filled with little boys and girls—his own classmates. He saw himself sitting there, his dark eyes dreamily wandering out of the window and to the turquoise blue of the April sky. Then he saw the little girl, who sat just behind him and who wore a pigtail down her back, turn to her neighbor and prudishly say, "Vachel Lindsay," her chin went up and her eyes blazed, "Vachel Lindsay is the queerest lad!" Now, even through the true

little picture in the soap bubble, he could feel again the hot color rush to his cheeks as slowly he climbed down from the heights and glued his eyes on the dull arithmetic book that lay neglected before him.

The large, beautiful bubble burst into thin air—the picture faded too.

A second time he dipped the spool into the warm suds and pursed his lips to blow a bubble. This time he could see himself walking dutifully between his mother and father on a warm Sunday morning. He could again hear the chattering of the birds and feel the hushed quietness that reigned over all. He could see himself springing along—a small lad who was very happy and very gay—his manuscript folded carefully under his arm. He seemed unable to wait until he got to the church where he was going to read. Then the picture changed. He was before the audience, reading in his clear, childish voice. Again he heard the murmur of contempt that swept the audience. Again he felt himself stunned into a frigid recital as the people openly murmured, “What a crazy little lad!” And then he was walking slowly along behind his parents—his dusky little head bowed, wondering *why* everybody scorned him so, and *why* he was not like all the other little boys who lived on his street and who played baseball every afternoon in the vacant lot by the old negro schoolhouse. Then this bubble burst as the first had done, and likewise this picture turned into a damp air that spattered on his small upturned face and rolled slowly down his cheeks mingled with two large tears. . . .

Through the long years that followed, Vachel grew to manhood—still alone and filled with dreams. No longer did he sit upon his wide doorsteps and imagine little pictures deep in his soap bubbles, but now his bubbles had turned into poems and in them he placed the little pictures that came straight from his heart.

One day he grew tired of family and respectability, and entered upon the most joyous and carefree period of his whole life. Vachel had always been a vagabond at heart, but now he joyfully became one in fact. For two short years he tramped the high roads and the low. Penniless, he traded his poems for food and lodging. Vachel was a strange figure as he toured along the crossties of a railroad or the dusty country lanes—his hair unruly, and his shoulders slightly swaying, keeping time with his easy stride. When he came to a house and it was nearing dusk, he would sweep off his hat with a gallant gesture and say to the startled housewife: “Madam, I am the Peddler of Dreams. I am the sole active member of the ancient brotherhood of the troubadours. It is against the rule of the order to receive money. We have the habit of asking a night’s lodging in exchange for repeating verses and fairy tales.”

Oftentimes the frightened woman would rudely shut the door before he had finished his speech. But many times she would stand on her door-

steps and eagerly listen to him. He would stand before her in his slouchy, ragged clothes, his head tilted upward, his dark eyes half-closed, and let his voice chant some melodious rhyme that he loved. His voice was as deep music rippling over the soul. Sometimes the notes were light, airy, and very bright. And then again they were deep and mellow and serious. He wrote his poems not to be read, but to be sung, chanted or crooned in just such a magnificent voice as was his.

His fame swept over the entire country and even Europe opened wide her doors to the foreigner who could touch so many hearts. But deep in his vagabond soul he was still unsatisfied. He wanted to win Springfield, his beloved home-town. Always he had dreamed of this—since the time as a lad he was jeered at by the other boys, and called a crazy little fool by the older men and women.

Back to the same old ancestral mansion he went. Back to the same old place he had dwelt as a child. There among the antiques of his dread forefathers he struggled along trying to keep the grocer paid and the light bill looked after.

For the three years that the poet lived in the old town, he lectured once each year in the First Christian Church, where he had appeared as a boy.

On that last meeting in the church, the portals were flung wide, and all of Springfield came to hear the man whom they had once laughed at—whom they had once called half-witted. He stood there in the dimly-lighted church and sang out the words of his poems, now mighty and rolling, now soft and crooning. The entire audience swayed with emotion. Old men nervously pulled at their long gray beads with clumsy, trembling fingers; old ladies took off their horn-rimmed spectacles in order to dry fast dampening eyes; young girls sat upright, a bit of linen tightly clutched in one of their hands; children leaned forward on the edge of their seats, their eyes rounded and widened with eagerness. Eyes sparkled and hearts sang. Everyone accepted him gratefully and apologetically as the greatest man Springfield had produced since the time of Lincoln, the saviour of the country!

* * * *

Although the peddler of dreams no longer sings upon this earth, if one listens closely enough on a still, soft, vagabond night, one may hear the echo of his mellow voice as he climbs the golden steps to paradise, "Dreams—beautiful dreams for sale."

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS OF QUEENS-CHICORA

FLORENCE MOFFITT

*"'Twas the week before Christmas
When all through the college
Every one was stirring—
And it wasn't for knowledge! . . ."*

Yes, everyone really has the Queens-Chicora Christmas spirit!—one which is quite different from that of the tired buyer trudging from store to store; one which is prompted by the thought of vacation and home, and fostered by the growth of spirited tradition.

Any upperclassman can vividly recall the vesper service conducted by the choral club. This customary program has been privileged to our college for years. So, choristers, sing on! And know that we are looking forward to this unforgettable tradition.

The next afternoon, namely Monday, is always reserved for the Christmas party given to the children of Alexander Home Orphanage; this is sponsored by the entire student body. Each of the seventy-odd children is provided with a temporary "Student Mother," who buys some small toy—a source of real Christmas joy to the child heart. Balloons, apples, gingerbread men, and all kinds of games put everyone in a humor peculiarly suitable to individual needs.

The Christmas dinner comes on the night most convenient for faculty, students, and turkeys! Knives and appetites are whetted, jokes and jollity keyed up until this final gala evening. After the banquet in the dining room, the crowd moves over to Burwell for the Christmas tree, upon which are hung some of our "thanks" to those who serve us so faithfully all year. The remainder of this night proceeds with the last minute "long distance" and telegrams which always seem inevitably necessary.

And then we crawl into bed dreaming vaguely all night of suitcases that need the whole suite to sit on them before bulging sides can be forced close enough for the catches to click; of that bottle of perfume for my roommate, and those twenty-two cards I must mail; of an alarm clock that

should go off some time soon; of mother—wherever she is—as excited as I, and all the family waiting! . . . Then all at once I hear “Joy to the World! The Lord is come . . .,” faintly at first, then growing stronger; I hadn’t thought of this part of Christmas enough perhaps. I remembered now that real Christmas joy cannot be felt unless one sees by that Bethlehem starlight which so long ago led the Wise Men to real happiness. I thought a little while: “Let every heart prepare him room”; and then I realized it was the girls—my friends—keeping another Queens-Chicora tradition. “And men and angels sing! . . .” Hurriedly, I put my coat on, and, feeling my way down the dark trunk-lined hall, joined them, singing again (in a spirit even above tradition) “Joy to the World! The Lord is Come!”



ANOTHER CUP OF TEA

*Love smiled at me o'er a teacup one day—
I gathered up my gloves and looked away;
But curious, perhaps, I glanced at him again
And in his eyes a gleam displaced the pain.
(Nice eyes and hair, my inner self commented)
And heard his pleading, youthful voice lamenting,
"Forgive me, dear—I won't forget again"—
O dear! My resolutions strong had been,
But with that boyish smile of questioning love
Just how could I resist him? So—I dropped a glove—
He gallantly reached down and handed it to me
And then I poured my husband another cup of tea.*

CATHERINE CULP;

KING EDWARD VII

DEAN MCLEAN



f the several volumes recently published concerning King Edward VII of England or the period during which he lived, I have so far read only one,—that of E. F. Benson. This book should be of great interest not only to the general reader but also to the lover of history and biography. Any study such as Mr. Benson has given would necessarily involve contact with many persons and affairs. The two outstanding figures in addition to the subject of the study are his mother, Queen Victoria, and his nephew, the Kaiser William II.

In spite of the policy of the Prince Consort, his father, never to relax in the effort to make his eldest son a replica of himself so far as mental training, moral attributes, artistic tastes and conservative conduct were concerned; in spite of the unswerving determination of the Queen, his mother, to second her husband's course in the education of their son, Albert Edward managed to break away from the pattern by which they would shape his character and emerged eventually as a personality of great charm, endowed with qualities of statesmanship which fitted him admirably for his duties as the future crowned head of a powerful nation.

His education, carried out rigidly as the Prince Consort had planned it, contributed little to his preparation for life. Nor, after the completion of this formal and strict discipline was he given an opportunity to learn something of the statecraft, a knowledge of which is so essential to one destined to rule. So wholly was he unlike his cultured and self-contained father, who in the Queen's eyes was perfection in every particular, that after the death of the Prince Consort she would not entrust to their son even the slightest participation in affairs of state. Her ministers, recognizing the native ability of the Prince, his magnetic personality and sound judgment, urged the Queen to admit him to the councils of State, but she resolutely refused to do so. Unknown to her, however, these Ministers did consult with him privately upon many matters of importance.

Here, then, was this young man arrived at years of maturity, if not of discretion, for whom a marriage had been arranged with the loveliest Princess of Europe; owner of Marlborough House and the country estates of Sandringham; possessor of an annual income of more than one hundred thousand pounds. All this, and with no occupation of a steady

character. Naturally genial, interested in people, liking companionship, fond of pleasure, it is not surprising that he seized the opportunity to enjoy thoroughly and heartily all that from which he had been so severely excluded during his minority.

Nevertheless, this mingling socially with his kind emphasized his aptness to read the minds of men and women, to know instinctively how to approach them, how to win them to his way of thinking,—a quality of inestimable value to any leader,—a quality which we call, or at least an element of that quality which we denominate diplomacy. This tactful and friendly attitude not only smoothed out many roughnesses, but also served to quiet more important matters which might have involved the government in serious difficulties.

The good-will of the Sultan of Turkey was won by his cordial reception in London by the Prince, supplemented by having conferred upon him through the influence of the Prince, the Order of the Garter, an honor desired by the Sultan, but which the Queen would have withheld.

Trouble was brewing in Erin. Why should not the young Prince and Princess visit their people there in an effort to bring back the fealty of the Irish? The Queen objected but Disraeli by his flatteries overcame her objections. They went, "he was installed Knight of St. Patrick, there was a state dinner, a state ball, a military review, and the days passed in a crescendo of enthusiasm as his jovial and genial personality made itself felt."

Again, India's growing dissatisfaction with her status in the Empire needed attention such as the Prince could so well give. Once more Disraeli overcame the Queen's opposition and a visit to India was arranged. The presence of the Prince among them gave to the native Princes and their Ministers a wholly different conception of the Government of England and their relations to it. "Throughout the tour he (the Prince) exercised those gifts of friendliness, combined with a due sense of his position, of personal attractiveness and geniality which had made his visit to Canada at the age of eighteen such a success. No one had taught him these; they were in the nature of the man, and they were indeed a royal equipment for a future king."

Even Bismarck conceded that this clever young man was a force to be reckoned with. Though the Prince was allied to Prussia by close family ties, he disliked Germany and loved France. The Iron Chancellor was congratulating himself that the cession of Cyprus to England by Turkey in a secret treaty would serve as the breaking point between England and France since France might interpret this as a menace to her interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. However, a conference between the Prince

and Gambetta, the power in the French Chamber at that time, resulted in disappointment to Bismarck.

On January 22, 1901, the Queen died and the Prince became the King, taking the title of Edward VII. There was much trepidation on the part of his subjects as to what his accession would mean to the British Empire. Some regarded him as a gambler and a fast-liver generally; others trusted that he might be steadied by his responsibilities as king. "Most people, in fact, were ignorant that for many years there had been no one who had more effectively devoted himself to the service of his country nor any whose advice and counsel were more mighty with the Ministers of the Crown; and from the first day of his reign to the last he was their indefatigable servant."

Edward planned to restore the brilliance of a court which had since his father's death years before suffered an eclipse. He dismissed most of his mother's officials, filling the vacancies with men whom he admired and trusted. He continued his participation in social pleasures, but did not allow that to interfere with state affairs, to which he gave himself sedulously. The Boer War was conducted to a successful issue; he steered clear of entanglements during the trouble between Russia and Japan; he maintained an attitude of apparent friendliness with his most difficult nephew, the Emperor of Germany.

It is interesting to note that the phrase *entente cordiale* which has passed into international currency, was used by Prince Edward during an unofficial conversation between the Prince and the French Ambassador in London. This was apropos of one of Bismarck's moves for the aggrandizement of Prussia, and the only hope of preventing war was that England and France should join hands. The Seven Weeks War took place and Bismarck won the game, but from that time on through forty years Edward's efforts to bring about this Anglo-French alliance were unceasing. It was strongly threatened by the events of the Boer War which was opposed by France, but Edward, taking the bull of his present unpopularity by the horns, went to Paris and by closing his ears to all unflattering comment and action, at the same time preserving an attitude of friendliness towards the French people, brought them back to their former allegiance. "In all history there is no more signal an example of so purely personal an achievement." On April 8, 1904, a final revision and agreement was reached and the Treaty between England and France was an accomplished fact. The value to the world of this *entente cordiale* was made emphatically clear by the line-up in 1914.

Mr. Benson's picture of Queen Victoria differs essentially from that drawn by Strachey. The former presents her as a self-centered woman throughout the period of her long widowhood. Living in the past, dwell-

ing upon the memory of her husband, she withdrew herself from her people, hampered by her stubborn resistance the action of her ministers, prevented to the limits of possibility the political development of her son, the heir to the throne; she was grasping and stingy, making small return to her subjects for the ample income she received from the State. In fact this complete withdrawal of herself from all public functions caused men of high position to think seriously of the desirability of her abdication. Notwithstanding, on such rare occasions as she forced herself to appear she was received with enthusiastic welcome. The sight of that small figure seemed to arouse to its depths that feeling of devotion to royalty which appears to be ingrained in a people who have always lived under monarchical conditions. Or was that welcome, in part at least, an expression of allegiance to the individual woman as well as to that for which she stood? And has Mr. Benson, perhaps, in his desire to portray Edward in favorable colors overlooked the good qualities of Edward's mother?

Of the Kaiser we have a full length portrait. As a small boy of four who had come with his mother to attend the marriage of his uncle he was "an inquisitive, sharp boy, rather impertinent to his elders." At the age of twelve he is described as "an inquisitive, highly intelligent boy." At twenty-five he was "wilful, hot-headed and mischievous." "He was quite untrustworthy"; "he showed himself capable of the meanest sorts of secret treachery." "He was of marked ability," "but his gifts were marred by the essential malice and crookedness of his nature and by a vanity so colossal that it would have been merely grotesque had its consequences not been so appalling." "He was also an unbridled liar." When Willie, as William II, succeeded to the throne at the end of his father's reign of a hundred days, all hope of national friendship between England and Germany came to a definite close. He became a menace to the peace of Europe, and it is quite in keeping with his character from childhood that he should have regarded his pledged word as a scrap of paper and that he should have brought about such a cataclysm as the World War.



*"She brought forth her first-born son,
And wrapped him in swaddling clothes,
And laid him in a manger."*

Luke 2.7.

BOOK REVIEWS

JOSEPHUS

An historical novel by Lion Feucht Wagner, translated (from the German?) by Welta and Edwin Muir; The Viking Press, N. Y., 1932; pp. 504. The author has written *Power*, *The Ugly Duchess*, *Success*, *Anglo-Saxon Plays*, etc.

The volume contains five books—*Rome*, *Galilee*, *Caesarea*, *Alexandria*, *Jerusalem*; and many brief subdivisions. No numerals are attached to books nor smaller portions, making changes of scene less mechanical. The translation gives few hints that it is not the original; the style is pleasing.

One could wish that the familiar and distinguishing *Josephus* had been retained in the text rather than the form *Joseph*, which has its own associations; and *Jotapata* rather than *Jotapat*.

The author was under no historical nor other requirement in using profane words; nor in the frankly stated sex incidents. His volume would have been more pleasing and have been not less valuable historically with all these omitted. Aside from these scenes there is little romance in the book. It is then an adapted presentation of *The Wars of the Jews*, by Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian. The fifth book, *Jerusalem*, is the best. In that book he renders vividly and in a manner deeply impressive the eye-witness' narrative of the awful siege of the Holy City and its terrible end in the fall of 70 A. D. Yet even there one misses the recognition of the sublime elements of the struggle of an ancient nation in its death throes; and there is not found that reverence for Deity that historical fidelity required.

By no means would a reading of *Josephus* be a fair equivalent to the reading of *The Wars of the Jews*, nor does this volume serve very well as an introduction thereto.

There is a good description of the triumphal procession of Titus, and a vivid delineation of the character of *Joseph*, though by no means a sympathetic one.

C. W. SOMMERVILLE

PREFERENCES OF A LIBRARIAN

On a marble relic in St. Ambrose church in Milan—itself a ruin—is a swastika freize: at least one early appearance of the Hitler emblem. In literature, as in architecture and sculpture, patterns reappear with the same fundamental form, though there may be ever so many differential incidents. Certain fairy tales have an identical theme; the Grail motif reappears from the German *Parzival* to Browning's *Childe Roland* and Lovell's *Vision of Sir Launfal*; and, as Norman Foerster was constantly flinging out utterance, "Puritanism is Romanticism on American soil." So it is that in Halliday Sutherland's *Arches of the Years*, fascinating though it be, we have but another *Story of San Miehale*, cut along much the same lines. Each is the autobiography of a doctor, with personality, who has Joan Crawford's flare for telling a tale—about anything—whales, or a sphinx. Very like *Cradle of the Deep*, *The Arches of the Years* have much of the sea on its pages. But, by reason of the young doctor's apprenticeship to his uncle in Spain, there are chapters on bull fights, on señoritas and fan-language, on the dancing of choir boys with castanets before the High Altar of the cathedral.

When he has gone back home to London and Scotland, various experiences with patients in an asylum make interesting reading. The book opens, by the way, with a vivid account of a mad man's escapades, in a home where Dr. Sutherland was a childhood guest. But no chapter is better done than the one which tells of his own father's death on the Moor; there with a reservation matching that of the dying Scotch physician we are given a piece of pathos where our only reaction is that of admiration for the kindly, courageous old man.

There are many striking sentences in the book worth pondering. These are two examples: "There are innocent people who write books and never reflect that if a publisher will not risk a penny on their immortal prose it is better that their thoughts should continue to blush unseen in manuscript. . . . Superstition is misdirected reverence whereby supernatural power is attributed to natural things, and this primitive instinct is so deep that we only laugh at those superstitions in which we have no belief."

On the whole, *Aches of the Years* is a readable, enjoyable volume.

Lamb in His Bosom by Caroline Miller is a tale of people of the soil of Georgia. Just as *South Moon Under* told of such life in Florida, so Caroline Miller pictures "the short and simple annals of the poor" dwelling in a little one-room cabin. In the dooryard grows fox-glove, not far from a

pole in whose lofty gourds martins and sparrows nest without benefit to the household. To the Librarian's way of thinking, there's nothing beautiful about such deprivation and poverty; nor has the author created a character of sufficient strength to stand out from the geese, heifers, and other domestic animals that move about the place. The crowing rooster, whose notes she takes pains to record musically, seems articulate besides these dumb slow-thinking human beings. Most of us, by painful first-hand contact, are too familiar with such scenes to need them preserved for us on a page. Would to God we could forget what we have seen with our own eyes!

One might search the British countryside over for such ugliness. Tiny houses? Yes, but white-washed stone and plaster structures with picturesque thatched roof and a dooryard of roses and lilies. More probably than not, there are rosevines with their softening, curved branches half-covering a portion of the house.

If you feel the need of a guide to aid you in your own discoveries of English rural beauty, H. V. Morton has some excellent books entitled *In Search of England* and *The Call of England* that are delightful. He also has volumes on Ireland and Scotland that recount his wayside experiences and observations there. Harold Aberlein, too, has a book called *Little Known England* with charming rare photographs by way of illustration. The whole of Devonshire and of the Wye and Severn Valley have just as much to offer in the way of beautiful language—though it is different—as has the English Lake District.

Having said that much, I might as well confess a preference for travel books rather than biography, though I did finish Zweig's *Marie Antoinette*. At the moment I am most curious to know whether or not Yates' *Bali, The Enchanted Isle* is fanciful. Probably; my Geography does not extend much beyond the knowledge of the fact that Tripoli is not in Italy.

R. HARRELL.



The book review of "Mandarin in Manhattan" in the October issue was written by Bettie Wicker.





MY TEDDY BEAR

*When big folks come around,
My funny teddy bear
Never makes a single sound;
He'll just sit and stare.*

*Folks think he's not alive,
And walk right on away.
But when they're all gone,
We begin our play.*

*We sail across the ocean—
Sometimes right through the air!
Oh, what fun big folks miss,
Not knowing teddy bear!*

MARGARET MITCHELL.

A WESTFUL WORLD

BETTY MANNING

Give to the Englishman his stately, majestic forest primeval, but to me give the restful, hauntingly beautiful Carolina swamp. It is a world within a world. It is the land of shadow sighs and half-tone echoes. Waters, black, suggestive, unfathomable, and rushes, virginal green but secretive, conceal and carpet the lush earth. Myriad dainty wild flowers and fragrant violets, waxen bay blossoms, and the flaming trumpet vines crouch among the underbrush and the fallen tree trunks. Towering above those silent waters are the gaunt cypresses with sombre gray Spanish moss streaming from every bough.

A wind stirs that moss, and it becomes as the straggling locks of a witch's hair. It is then that sighs of ancient souls fill the air. And mortal invaders, apprehensive, awe-stricken, hesitate as sounds of other days and years drift—and fade. But when the moon rises to fill the land with soft shadows, the witches' locks turn to silvery black pennants, and plaintive moans float over a dreamy, silent world.



*"O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westbound leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light."*

WHO'S WHO AMONG US

Mary Wisdom Lambeth offers as her initial contribution to *The Sceptre* the frontispiece, with its superimposed poem. She is a member of The Poetry Club, and quite an artist—facts that should help her bring close together our college art department and literary magazine.

Jeanette Mallory did literary work on her high school paper, *The Senior Spokesman*, but her story, "And There Were in the Same Country," is the first of her writing to appear in this magazine. Her talent is decidedly along literary lines, as her membership in the Poetry Club, in the Latin Club, and in the French Society shows.

Florence Moffitt, the author of those Queens-Chicora Christmas traditions so dear to us all, was a member of last year's *Queens Blues* staff, but this is her first work for *The Sceptre*; and she has caught in it the atmosphere of the approaching season.

Margaret True wrote last year for the *Coraddi* of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina. Her "Silhouette" is kaleidoscopic, appealing, vivid.

Hazel Herndon was the literary editor of the annual, *The Laurel*, and the associate editor of the college paper, *The Hilltop*, of Mars Hill Junior College. She was also an officer in the Writer's Club, and for her recital in the Dramatic Department she gave an original short story.

Margaret Mitchell worked in both the art and literary departments of *Lace and Pig Iron* of Charlotte Central High School. At the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, she helped write and produce a play, "A Modern Blue Beard." In this issue of the magazine she works out the illustration for her poem, "My Teddy Bear."

Catherine Culp had no distinct literary connections in high school; and, although she is on the staff of the *Queens Blues*, the poem, "A Cup of Tea," is her first contribution to *The Sceptre*. She is also a member of the Poetry Club.

Margaret Trobaugh's colorful sketch, "A Child's Christmas-Day Night," is an interesting initial offering to the magazine.

LOOKING OVER OTHERS

What of the magazines from other colleges? Let us look at a few in our Exchange Column. Some are entirely different from ours—but we will find them interesting; some are more like *The Sceptre*—but we can get from them good ideas.



Hail to thee, Duke *Archive*! Your November issue has brought to us those things which appeal to one interested in any of the various forms of literature. To the story lover your material is entertaining and quite pleasing. Your poetry and drama, for those so inclined, is up to the highest standard of good writing. Your book reviews and added features tend to make you a fully rounded and delightful publication.



*"How lightly lisps the lark at Dawn!
At least I'm told that this is so.
I've never once since I was born,
Been up that time. I do not know.
At any rate, the lark is up,
He sings to each and every flower.
The Periwinkle, Buttercup,
They rise at this ungodly hour
To hear the happy music flow
At dawn, and then the stupid rooster
Welcomes daybreak with a crow,
Let them get up, but I refuse to."*

This poem addressed "To the Dawn of Day," by J. B. of the South Carolina University *Carolinian* is a good example of the sophisticated type of verse that magazine features. In the recent unexpurgated edition for October the Poetry page, which is one of the most commendable features of the magazine, was devoted entirely to these short poems in the Dorothy Parker-Margaret Fishback manner, and though they do not treat of the deep subjects that poems are usually made of, they give a pleasant variation in their frank cynosure. There is nothing of the amateur in any of this poetry—which is certainly saying something.

AS THEY SEE US

The *Sceptre* introduces a new department—one of literary criticism that will consider the magazine as a whole, or will center upon any specific part of it.

In this first appearance the contributions belong to members of the faculty. In our future issues we desire the opinions of both the faculty and the students. Toss us stones and a flower or two: we need and like both. And we extend our appreciation to those of you who have expressed your opinions for our December magazine.

"I miss a certain personal flavor that only the familiar essayist can add. Where is she who will write whimsically or seriously, in literary vein, on things wise and otherwise, here and elsewhere, some such spirit as speaks through a 'Contributor's Column' in *The Atlantic* or a 'Lion's Mouth,' in *Harper's*? Think of the finer possibilities of *A Wayside Breakfast Under a Rising Sun* (there have been many such this fall, haven't there?) or of *Last Thoughts on First Nights* (what memories of stunt night!). And why not a classic on our Mecca—The Little Store? Where are our familiar essayists? I look forward to meeting them."

ELIZABETH BLAIR.

"What of the Fine Arts? Would a suggestion that you widen the scope and show the various phases of that class of work here—if some space be dedicated to those arts—be out of place?"

MARY FORMAN.

Mrs. Lyon expresses her like of the attitude toward new contributions. She adds, "I don't like the way in which the article, *Patterns of Modern American Poetry*, in the October issue, was divided. I would have enjoyed it much more if I could have read straight through the paper without having to hunt continually for the continuations."

"The article on *Patterns of Modern American Verse* was a bit too long for the size of the magazine, and the frequent division of it detracted from its appeal. Otherwise, I enjoyed your magazine." Thus Miss Edwards presented her opinion.

Mr. Kennedy suggests a literary treatment of such questions as "Why is the Soviet Government so much on the front page these days? Is the recognition of Russia by the United States a dangerous step for us?" "These and many other similar questions are live topics that might be investigated by students of today."

"I appreciate your policy of encouraging new writers as especially evidenced in the October issue. Your staff is cordial to beginners. And I think your policy of exploring for new writers is interesting to the readers and encouraging to literary aspirants."

CORDELIA HENDERSON.



*"Long ago there was born
In the city of David
A sweet, holy Babe,
Who was Jesus our King."*

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